

REMARKS

This application includes claims 1-26. Claims 1, 5, 14, 16 and 24 are hereby amended. No new matter has been introduced. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Applicant thanks Examiner Nguyen for the courtesy of an interview granted to Applicant's representative, Daniel Kligler (Reg. No. 41,120) at the USPTO on May 5, 2004. At the interview, Applicant proposed to amend claims 1, 14 and 24 to incorporate certain limitations from the specification, in order to distinguish the present invention over the cited art. Applicant also proposed to add a new claim 27, based on claim 1, but with the additional limitation that the CPE submits to the end switch a request to read all information in the MIB that is associated with a network connection specified in a trap message sent by the end switch. At the interview, agreement was not reached regarding to the proposed amendment to claims 1, 14 and 24, but the Examiner stated that he would give further consideration to proposed claim 27. In an e-mail communication subsequent to the interview, the Examiner indicated that claim 27 could distinguish over the cited art. Applicant has accordingly amended the limitations of claim 27 into claims 1, 14 and 24.

Claims 5 and 16 were objected to for depending from a rejected base claim, but were deemed to recite patentable subject matter. Applicant has therefore amended these two claims to stand as independent claims, incorporating the limitations of the base claims and intervening claims from which they formerly depended. Claims 5 and 16 are now believed to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 1-4, 6-15 and 17-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Wang (U.S. Patent 6,636,505) in view of Chari (U.S. Patent 6,058,445). Wang describes a method for automatically provisioning a broadband communication service to a subscriber. In this context, Wang describes the use of a Management Information Base (MIB) (col. 8, lines 42-53). Chari describes a data management method for adding or exchanging components on a running computer. Management software (called Maestro) maintains hot plug MIB variables by periodically executing a retrieve_data routine, which generates and sends SNMP requests. In an embodiment described by

Chari, each of these requests seeks one MIB variable value (col. 90, lines 48-56). A client computer may execute the retrieve_data routine to refresh the hot plug MIB variables in response to TRAP_Hot_Plug_Variable messages issued by SNMP agent software (col. 91, lines 10-18).

Claim 1, as amended, recites a method for network management that comprises sending a trap message from a network end switch to CPE, to inform the CPE of a change in a network MIB with respect to a specified network connection. Subsequently, a request is received from the CPE, asking to read all information in the MIB that is associated with the specified network connection. The end switch provides the information to the CPE, and determines the change to have been implemented by the CPE based on the request. The language of amended claim 1 is identical to that of proposed claim 27, as discussed at the interview. The amendment is supported in the specification on page 4, lines 17-18, and page 10, lines 9-15. The aspect of the present invention covered by the amended claim permits all the MIB information regarding a given connection to be sent at once, and thus simplifies the handling of changes in multi-client environments. It obviates the need for clients to poll the end switch in response to trap messages and to parse the information that they receive from the end switch (page 10, lines 18-24).

Chari explicitly describes a diametrically-opposed approach to distributing MIB information: sending just one MIB variable at a time from the server (col. 90, lines 48-56). Even if it were conceded that Chari suggests sending multiple MIB variables at once, the cited art still makes no suggestion that all the information regarding a given network connection be read by the CPE at once, as required by amended claim 1. For reasons of communication efficiency, methods of MIB updating known in the art involve reading only information that has changed in the MIB. There is no motivation in the cited art to read all information in the MIB relating to a given connection (including information that may not have changed), as required by amended claim 1. Furthermore, Chari is concerned with hot-pluggable components, rather than network connections as recited in claim 1, and Wang does not relate to MIB updates. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is patentable over the cited art. In view of

the patentability of amended claim 1, claims 2-4 and 6-13, which depend from claim 1, are believed to be patentable, as well.

Independent claims 14 and 24 respectively recite network access multiplexing apparatus and client premises equipment, and have been amended to include limitations similar to those of amended claim 1. Therefore, these claims are also believed to be patentable, as are claims 15 and 17-23, which depend from claim 14, and claims 25 and 26, which depend from claim 24.

Applicant has studied the additional prior art references made of record by the Examiner, and believes the claims in the present patent application to be patentable over these references, whether the references are taken individually or in any combination.

Applicant believes the amendments and remarks stated above to be fully responsive to all of the objections and grounds of rejection raised by the Examiner. In view of these amendments and remarks, all the claims in the present patent application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Prompt notice to this effect is requested.

June 3, 2004

Respectfully submitted,



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